

**Accident No.: DCA13MR003**  
**Accident Type: Derailment and Collision**  
**Location: Bridgeport, CT**  
**Date: May 17, 2013**

## **Preliminary Report**

*The information in this report is preliminary and will be supplemented or corrected during the course of the investigation.*

At 6:01 pm on Friday, May 17, 2013, eastbound Metro North Railroad passenger train, 1548, (departing Grand Central Station, NY toward New Haven, CT) derailed near milepost 53.3 on track number 4 and was struck by westbound Metro North passenger train, 1581 (departing New Haven toward Grand Central Station). As a result of the collision, 73 passengers, 2 engineers, and a conductor were transported to local hospitals with injuries. Metro North estimated there were about 250 passengers on each train at the time of the accident.

Damage was estimated by Metro North at \$ 18.0 million. The weather at the time of the accident was reported 71 degrees Fahrenheit and partly cloudy with no precipitation.

The Metro North Commuter Railroad, New Haven line runs in a geographic east-west direction between Bronx, New York and New Haven, Connecticut. In the vicinity of the accident, the track structure consists of four main tracks. The maximum authorized speed on the four main tracks in the vicinity of the accident is 70 mph with no posted speed restrictions.

Train movements on the New Haven line are governed by the Metro North Commuter Railroad operating rules and the signal indications of a traffic control signal system supplemented with cab signals and train control.

The track on the New Haven line is visually inspected three times weekly. This track inspection is performed with the use of a hi-rail vehicle or on foot. The last track inspection prior to the derailment was performed on May 15, 2013 by hi-rail. The inspection found an insulated rail joint with inadequate supporting ballast and indications of vertical movement of the track system under load at catenary No. 734 on track 4 near MP53.3.

Preliminary indications are that the point of derailment (POD) occurred at MP 53.3. At this location, sections of rail in the area of the derailment containing rail joint bars were removed and shipped to the NTSB materials laboratory in Washington, DC for further examination.

Initial information obtained from onboard event recorders indicates that the eastbound train was traveling at about 70 mph when it derailed. After the eastbound train came to rest, it was fouling the adjacent track, track 2, and was struck about 20 seconds later by the westbound train. Initial information from the event recorders indicate that the westbound train engineer applied the emergency brakes, slowing from 70 mph to 23 mph prior to striking the eastbound train.

The parties to the investigation include Metro North Railroad, the Federal Railroad Administration, the Association of Commuter Rail Employee (ACRE), the Metropolitan Transportation Authority Police Department (MTA PD), Connecticut Department of Transportation (CDOT), Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET), and United Transportation Union (UTU).